

**Washington State University**  
Pullman, WA

**Biochemistry**  
Bachelor of Science, May 2002

**NASA Academy Research  
Project:  
Physiology and Modeling of  
Neural Networks**

Principal Investigator; Richard Boyle



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**Education:**

I will graduate from Washington State University in May 2002 with a B.S. in Biochemistry. In the fall I will begin graduate studies in Biological Oceanography, as well as joining the innovative Astrobiology program, at the University of Washington in Seattle. I will study organisms in extreme environments with the hope of applying this knowledge to the consideration of life on other planets.

**Experience:**

I first decided to pursue this “astrobiology” thing during my sophomore year at Washington State University. I switched majors from pre-veterinary to biochemistry and attended my very first science conference. The American Society for gravitational and space Biology annual conference in Seattle. As it happened, the outgoing president of the society, Dr. Norman Lewis, was a Professor and director of the Institute for Biological Chemistry at WSU. The following summer I started working on my Honors thesis in his lab, studying the phenylpropanoid pathway in plants. I was named an Outstanding Undergraduate Research Scholar for that work, and have also received a NASA Space Grant Scholarship and Honorable Mention from the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program. As a junior I studied abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark for an exciting semester, and later returned to Europe to backpack solo for five weeks. Most recently I worked on a transmission electron microscopy project in Dr. Luying Xun’s lab at WSU, where I investigated the bioremediation of hexavalent chromium by bacteria.

Besides traveling and working in the lab, I enjoy conveying science and technology to others. One way I’ve accomplished this is by answering science-related questions posed by students to “Ask Dr. Universe,” a newspaper column and web site run by Washington State University. Previously, I acted as a mentor and technician in the Freshman Seminar Program at WSU, helping students to develop computer and research skills.

**Extra-curricular Activities**

I am a self-described nerd, but a nerd of many flavors; I am a band nerd (playing jazz and classical trumpet, as well as picking up the acoustic guitar), computer nerd (managing web sites and becoming as a Tetris pro), and a science nerd (reading science fact and fiction

voraciously and attending scientific conferences for fun); most tellingly, perhaps, is that I know to  $2^7$  digits. I do get outside, however, where my favorite activities include snow skiing and hiking